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Hemstock adopts it. He must forgive us if we appear to be hard upon him: our intention is rather to tilt at the system of publishing immature works.

Mr. Walter Macfarren has already made his mark in piano-forte music, and now essays to bear off some of the honours pertaining to composers of sacred music. His effort is not wanting in boldness, for we hold it an established fact that it is more difficult to write *simply* and successfully, than when thoroughly unfettered by the exigences of parish choirs. Taking these matters into consideration, we think he is entitled to some commendation for having produced a Chant Service, which is at once easy, taking and appropriate.

All this, however, and more, may be said of the setting by Dr. Garrett. It is a case in which the composer is evidently at home with his subject, and moulds it freely to suit his fancy. The meaning of the words is forced into notice by the vigorous and appropriate setting they receive; and the general effect is further enhanced by the masterly accompaniment which alternately supports and embellishes the voice part. Yet is the setting a comparatively simple one. Chiefly in unison, the four parts are used now and then—but very sparingly—with an exceedingly good effect. But we have one fault to find. May we ask why the ancient and modern notation is used so indiscriminately? One must be right and the other wrong. A part from this, we have nothing to say of Dr. Garrett's Service which is not complimentary. Surely a work so easy and yet so full of good music should prove a boon, especially to those for whose use it was intended, viz.—parish choirs.

*Six Four-part Songs* (S.A.T.B.) Composed by Walter Macfarren.

1. *Spring*. Poetry by Mary Cowden Clarke.
2. *Summer*. " ditto
3. *Autumn*. " ditto
4. *Winter*. " ditto
5. *You Stole my Love*. Poetry by A. Munday (1553).
6. *Dainty Love*. " W. Wager (1500).

Mrs. COWDEN CLARKE's poetry has been sympathetically wedded to music by Mr. Macfarren. The first song, "Spring," has a pleasing and joyous subject which is not frittered away by "learned" harmonies. A running scale passage in thirds for sopranos and altos, answered by a similar passage for basses and tenors, in the last two lines of the verse, is exceedingly effective. No. 2, "Summer," is a flowing melody, thoughtfully harmonised, and remarkably well written for the voices. The phrase marked *Glorioso*, is a real musical welcome to a sunny and genial friend; and the ascent of the sopranos to the upper A flat is in excellent keeping with the joyful character of the poetry. If we have a fault to find with "Autumn," it is that the opening subject is somewhat too sombre. It commences with a marked theme for the basses, in D minor, which is pertinaciously repeated twice afterwards with much effect. The sudden burst in the tonic major, after the lingering dominant harmony, is a point worthy of special commendation—the music, indeed, being coloured with a richness in consonance with the "ripe golden corn and purple grapes," in praise of which the poet sings. "Winter" starts with a theme, "Allegro vivace," which, as the words rather glorify the lively than the dreary aspect of the season, is as appropriate as can be desired. The change of rhythm at the words, "Have we not his Christmas night," introduces a most graceful melody, the harmonies to which are as simple as such compositions should be. A good effect is obtained towards the conclusion of the song by repeating the words "Christmas night" in the alto and bass parts, in detached phrases, whilst the other voices continue the melody. No. 5, "You Stole my Love," is already well known; and its characteristic subject generally ensures for it, in performance, a hearty encore. A careful perusal of the song confirms our opinion of its merits. Apart from the light and catching melody, so excellently fitted to the words, the counterpoint is written in a masterly manner through-

out. We are especially pleased with the effect of the return to the subject, after the harmony of the dominant, in the relative minor. No. 6, "Dainty Love," is handled as well, perhaps, as a composer can handle words so little suggestive of musical ideas. The theme is melodious, and the constant repetition of the word "dangerous," gives much character to the composition. Well sung, there can be little doubt that this unpretending song would please, from the peculiar quaintness, both of the music and poetry.

*Songs, &c., from "The Artist's Stratagem."* A Drawing Room Operetta, by J. Tom Burgess, Esq. Music by Rosario Aspa.

1. *The Land that I Love*.
2. *I'm not in Love, not I*.
3. *My Heart is Free*.
4. *Those Eyes which Beam*.
5. *Now Fate, alas, has Parted*. Trio, unaccompanied.

This group of compositions is from a little Operetta, published in Routledge's Christmas Annual for 1870, intended specially for performance by amateurs in a drawing-room. Like all the songs of this composer, they are vocal, simple and melodious; and, above all, most admirably suited for the purpose for which they are written. No. 1 is an unpretending theme in G minor, easy to sing, and pretty enough to delight a Christmas party. No. 2, "I'm not in Love, not I," has a tripping subject which will charm all hearers. This song must, we think, make its way out of the Operetta, for it is not only pleasing, but excellent in treatment throughout. There is much archness in the repetition of the words, "Not in Love," and "Not I," whilst the theme progresses uninterruptedly in the pianoforte part. A descent of *seven-sizes* to the low C is also a point in every respect admirable. No. 3 is full of character. Commencing with a graceful melody in F, a modulation takes place into B flat, in which key, a very elegant waltz is played as the accompaniment to the voice. We scarcely like the manner in which the return to the original key is effected, although we have no positive fault to find with the progression. No. 4 is an extremely vocal melody, and thoroughly expressive of the words. The sudden change from C into A flat is really beautiful; and there is a refinement pervading every bar of this composition which lifts it—musically speaking—not only far above the other songs in the Operetta, but above any song by this composer which has yet come before us. We can conscientiously recommend it to the attention both of vocalists and teachers. No. 5 is a smoothly written trio, intended to be sung unaccompanied. We like every part of this except the last phrase, where the voices are held out for two bars on the unvocal word "meet," the first being dominant harmony suspended over the key-note, and the second the resolution of the chord on the key-note harmony. The five compositions here noticed, are the only portions of the Operetta published by Messrs. Novello; but the Annual, containing the dialogue and concerted music, has been forwarded to us, and we can, therefore, now judge of the work in its entire state. A very simple duet for female voices, "No one is here," is melodious and sufficiently dramatic, to afford scope for a little acting. The next duet, "See, O how charming" (also for two ladies), has a pretty waltz subject, the voice parts being thoroughly within the power of drawing-room vocalists. The finale contains no difficulties, but is full of effect, and the voices are impartially provided with ample opportunities for being heard. The subject, commencing on the words, "You see success has crown'd my plot," is exceedingly happy; and the entire finale, small as it is in construction, is based upon good models.

*Christmas Bells*. A Four-part Song. Words by Tennyson. Music by Frederick Bridge, Mus. Bac., Oxon.

A telling Part-Song, with a considerable amount of clever writing, to the well known words of the Laureate, "The time draws near the birth of Christ." If we might